

Tell a story by KristiLynn

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Summary:

Hopper knew he'd have to start telling people about Eleven he just didn't think it would be this soon. (Spoilers for Stranger Things 2)

Tell a story

Hopper looked at the clock above the door, 5 on the dot. It was time to get home, he had promised Jane that he was going to make dinner tonight and he really didn't want to break that promise. He was going to do this dad thing right for a change.

"Leaving so soon?" Flo asked as he walked by her desk.

"Yep, got somewhere to be," Hopper said sliding on his jacket.

"Well Joyce Byers can wait." She held out a stack of papers. "You have paperwork."

Hopper groaned to himself. He knew about the work, he'd been putting it off these last few weeks with everything that happened to Will and Jane, but he hoped that Flo wouldn't notice.

"I will do it tomorrow alright? Bright and early."

"When have you shown up early to anything?" Flo placed the papers in his hands. "Now can I say something that's overstepping my bounds?"

"When do you not?"

"You need to stop seeing her."

"Who?"

"Joyce Byers. I may be old Jim but I'm not stupid. I know something is going on with the two of you and it's affecting your work."

Hopper took a seat on the edge of Callahan's desk. He knew this would happen eventually. There had been a change in his work over the past year, even when he was at his darkest he still showed up to work everyday and he got everything done that need to be done. And of course Flo would be the one to call him on it, she'd known him since he was a boy and she wasn't one to put up with his shit.

"I'm not dating Joyce."

“Fine. Joyce, Sandra, Betty I don’t care what the floozy’s name is you need to ditch her until you get your life back together.”

“Her name is Jane.” Hopper knew that Flo would be the first person he told, she’d read him the riot act if she found out from someone else. He just didn’t think he’d be telling her this soon. “She’s thirteen.”

Flo raised her eyebrow but stayed quiet, giving him the chance to tell her the story he, Joyce and Jane had crafted, a mix of truth and lie.

He told about how he’d met Terry Ives in a bar when he was back in town after his mother died. He told about how they saw each other a couple times but Hawkin’s wasn’t where he belonged and he wanted to make things official with Diane. He was adamant about the fact that he never knew about the pregnancy until Jane showed up in town scared and alone.

“Something happened to Terry when Jane was just a little girl, I don’t know if she remembers and honestly I’m not going to force her to relive it if she does. After that she was raised by a man Terry knew: Papa.” Hopper spit out the name of the man who raised Jane like it was venom, “It’s the only name I can get out of her and maybe that’s best because if I got my hands on that man I would kill him for what he did to her. Mentally, physically,” his hands tightened around the papers. “he fucked with her, made her a shell, unable to trust or express feelings. It’s been a year and we’re just now starting to make progress.”

Flo dabbed her eye with a tissue. “So that’s why you’ve been acting the way you have.”

“I couldn’t tell anyone. She fought so hard to get out of that home and I was afraid of what would happen if he found out where she was.”

“Well I want to meet her. When she’s ready of course.”

“Of course. She um,” Hopper sniffled “she’d really like that I think.”

“Well until then you need to keep up with your work.” Flo tapped the

papers. “Take it home, let Jane see what you do.”

Hopper shook his head as he stood up. “Alright.”

“And I meant what I said, as soon as she’s ready I want to meet her. Maybe cook the two of you dinner? I’m sure she’d love a good meal.”

“As long as there’s dessert she’ll be happy with whatever. But thank you.”

“Your welcome.” Flo tapped him on the arm. “Now get home to that girl of yours. I’ll see you tomorrow.”

“I’ll see you tomorrow.”

Hopper headed out the door and took a deep breath. First person down, but so many left to go.